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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 131739

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SUBJECT: TRAVEL ALERT: INDIA ? SECURITY ISSUES

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¶1. The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens to continuing security concerns in India. The U.S. Government continues to receive information that terrorist groups may be planning attacks in India. Terrorists and their sympathizers have demonstrated their willingness and capability to attack targets where Americans or Westerners are known to congregate or visit. In addition, there continues to be a possibility of violence in the south-central Indian state of Andhra Pradesh over the contentious issue of creating a separate state within Andhra Pradesh. This Alert replaces the Travel Alerts dated October 29 and December 9, 2009, and expires on January 31, 2010.

¶2. The November 2008 attacks in Mumbai provided a vivid reminder that hotels and other public places are especially attractive targets for terrorist groups. U.S. citizens are urged always to practice good security, maintain a heightened situational awareness and a low profile. Americans are advised to monitor local news reports and consider the level of security present when visiting public places, including religious sites, or choosing hotels, restaurants, entertainment and recreation venues.

¶3. There is also the possibility of violence in the south-central Indian state of Andhra Pradesh as civil unrest continues over the contentious issue of statehood for the Telangana region. The Department recommends that U.S. citizens defer all non-essential travel to Telangana and certain parts of Hyderabad (especially the Assembly and Secretariat, Osmania University, Panjagutta, and Ameerpet areas). The Telangana Region includes the districts of Rangareddi, Warangal, Medak, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Adilabad, Khammam, Nalgonda, and Mahbubnagar. There has also been sporadic unrest in the coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions, most notably in the cities of Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Guntur, Ongole, Kurnool, and Chittoor.

¶4. Andhra Pradesh continues to experience episodic civil unrest as pro- and anti-statehood political

groups rally supporters to their respective causes. A number of strikes have shut down schools and businesses, making it at times difficult to obtain essentials such as gasoline. Protesters have targeted public transportation, attacking trains and burning numerous buses. Public transportation networks have been forced to shut down several times. There have been repeated clashes between police and protesters, damage to private property, and a number of deaths and injuries associated with the disturbances. Government security forces have been augmented in many parts of the state, especially in Hyderabad and in the Telangana region.

¶5. U.S. citizens resident or traveling in Andhra Pradesh during this period are reminded to maintain a high level of security awareness at all times and avoid political rallies, demonstrations, and large crowds of any kind. U.S. citizens should monitor the situation via media sources, including TV and radio and via the Internet.

¶6. U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration website so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. For additional information, please refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad."

¶7. For the latest security information, Americans

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traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's Internet website where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States and Canada or, for callers outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Americans are also encouraged to read the Country Specific Information for India, available on the Consulate's website, Embassy's website and also at the Department's website.

¶8. U.S. citizens with questions or concerns may contact the American Citizens Services Unit of the Embassy or the Consulates General for further information:

-- The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi is located at Shanti Path, Chanakya Puri 110021; telephone +91-11-2419-8000; fax +91-11-2419-8407.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Mumbai (Bombay) is located at Lincoln House, 78 Bhulabhai Desai Road, 400026, telephone +91-22-2363-3611; fax +91-22-2363-10350.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Chennai (Madras) is at 220 Anna Salai, Gemini Circle, 600006, telephone +91-44-2857-4000; fax +91-44-2811-2027.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Kolkata (Calcutta) is at 5/1 Ho Chi Minh Sarani, 700071; telephone +91-33-3984-2400; fax +91-33-2282-2335.

-- The U.S. Consulate General in Hyderabad is at Paigah Palace, 1-8-323, Chiran Fort Lane, Begumpet, Secunderabad 500 003; telephone: +91 (40) 4033-8300.

¶9. Minimize considered.

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